



HEALTH LITERACY FOR THE WIN!



University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

BE PREPARED TO TALK TO YOUR HEALTH-CARE TEAM

Questions List

Here are some questions that you might want to ask your health-care team. Use this list to help you decide which questions you need to ask. Consider asking at least three questions at your next medical appointment.

Questions about a prescription

A prescription is a medicine that your doctor must order so that you can take it. You cannot buy these without having the doctor recommend them.

- What is the name of the medicine?
- How do you spell the name?
- Can I take a generic version?
- What is the medicine for?
- How am I supposed to take it?
- When should I take it?
- How much should I take?
- How long do I need to take it?
- When will it start working?
- Can I stop taking the medicine if I feel better?
- Will I be able to get a refill?
- Are there side effects?
- When should I tell someone about side effects?

- Do I need to avoid food, drinks, or activities?
- Should I stop taking other prescriptions I am taking?

Questions about a diagnosis and treatment

A diagnosis is when a provider looks at symptoms and identifies the illness or condition.

- What is my diagnosis?
- What is the technical name of my disease or condition?
- What is my prognosis (outlook for the future)?
- What changes do I need to make day to day?
- Is there a chance someone else in my family has this same condition?
- Will I need special help at home to manage the condition?



- Is there treatment?
- What are treatment options?
- What do you recommend?
- Is treatment painful?
- What are risks and benefits of treatment options?
- How much does this treatment cost?
- What are the expected results?
- When will I see results from the treatment?
- Are there side effects of the treatment?
- What can be done to manage side effects?
- How soon should I decide about treatment?
- What happens if I choose no treatment at all?

Questions about medical tests or surgery

- What is the test for?
- How is the test done?
- Will the test hurt?
- How accurate is the test?
- Is the test the only way to find out the information?
- What are the benefits and risks of having this test?
- What do I need to do to prepare for the test?
- How many times will the test need to be performed?
- When will I get the results?

- What will the results tell us?
- What is the next step after the test?
- Why do I need surgery?
- What kind of surgery do I need?
- Will you be doing the surgery?
- What are the benefits and risks of having the surgery?
- How successful is this surgery?
- Which location is the best for this surgery?
- Will the surgery hurt?
- Will I need anesthesia?
- How long will the surgery take?
- How long will it take to recover?
- How long will I be in the hospital?
- What will happen after the surgery?

Questions about hospitals or long-term care

- Which hospital has the best care for my condition?
- Does the hospital meet national quality standards?
- How does the hospital compare to others in my area?
- Has the hospital had success with my condition?
- What kind of services do I need?
- What are my care options?
- Will this facility meet my needs?
- How is this care facility rated?

Source: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; <https://www.ahrq.gov/questions>

Copyright © 2022 for materials developed by University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension. This publication may be reproduced in portions or its entirety for educational or nonprofit purposes only. Permitted users shall give credit to the author(s) and include this copyright notice. Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability.

